

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ORM-02 VO-03 SCA-01

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1140

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 3289

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE REFUGEES

REF: STATE 172695

1. MISSION QUERIED APPROPRIATE UNHCR OFFICIAL TODAY ON POINTS RAISED
APRA 3 REFTEL. SITUATION REMAINS ESSENTIALLY SAME AS EARLIER REPORTED,

I.E., UNHCR DOES NOT YET CONSIDER TRUE REFUGEE PROBLEM POSED AS RESULT

LEBANESE CONFLICT.

2. SPECIFICALLY, UNHCR REP STATED NO HOST GOVERNMENT HAS THUS FAR
APPROACHED ORGANIZATION OR REQUESTED ANY ASSISTANCE IN REGARD TO
LEBANESE NOW ON ITS SOIL. ON OTHER HAND, UNHCR HAS ACTIVELY SOLICITED
INFORMATION FROM ITS BRANCH OFFICES IN COUNTRIES WHERE LEBANESE HAVE
FLED. ALMOST UNIVERSAL RESPONSE (INTER ALIA FROM GERMANY, FRANCE,

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SWITZERLAND AND CYPRUS) HAS BEEN THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS CURRENTLY

FOCUSING ON PROBLEM IN TERMS OF LEGAL STATUS OF LEBANESE NOW IN COUNTRY. VIRTUALLY ALL THUS FAR CONSIDERED ZTEMPORARY RESIDENTS." NO RPT NO GOVERNMENT HAS YET LAUNCHED OR ASKED FOR ANY MATERIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, PROBABLY BECAUSE O RELATIVELY AFFLUENT STATUS OF THOSE WHO HAVE FLET LEBANON THUS FAR.

3. REP SAID ALL HOST GOVERNMENTS APPEARED ANXIOUS TO AVOID ANY MEASURE WHICH WOULD PRONOUNCE THEMSELVES ON POLITICAL FUTURE OF LEBANON, SUCH AS DIVIDED STATUS, ETC. THUS THERE IS GENERAL "WAIT AND SEE" ATTITUDE WHICH APPLIES NOTABLY TO STATUS OF LEBANESE DEPARTEES.

4. OFFICIAL OBSERVED, HOWEVER, THAT IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHETHER SITUATION WOULD BE "SAME A WEEK FROM NOW." (APROPOS, TODAY'S INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE CARRIES FEATURE NYT ARTICLE BT HENRY TANNER HEADLINED "POOR ARE NOW FLEEING BEIRUT"WHICH RAISES PROSPECT OF NEW DIMENSION TO FUTURE LEBANESE REFUGEE PROBLEM.) WHILE OFFICIAL REPEATED THAT UNHCR IN CURENT CIR- CUMSTANCES NOT RPT NOT THEREFORE PLANNING APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS, HE NOTED CRYPTICALLY THAT, SHOULD IT DO SO, "YOU WILL BE AMONG THE FIRST TO KNOW."DALE

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